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ABSTRACT

In this program for college students the goal is to help students learn more efficiently and effectively. Designed primarily to aid the under-prepared student, the program attempts to fill in gaps in the student's background and help him or her learn those techniques that are necessary to college survival. A diagnostic survey is conducted with the individual student; and areas in which definite problems are apparent are identified. Materials and readings are recommended based on the student's needs both in terms of skills and time. Personal contact and interaction between students and the attending staff is emphasized. Workshops are designed for less serious problems and are conducted on a small group discussion basis. Self-evaluation is an important element in this individualized program. Test anxiety was found to be one of the major problems facing students and was considerably helped by the program. Preliminary statistical analyses of students participating in the learning skills laboratory are appended. (JD)

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A Model for an Individualized College Program in Learning Skills Development

by

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Learning skills development programs on the college level have been developed across the country to help students learn more efficiently and effectively. Often such programs have been designed with the underprepared, the "marginal" student in mind. The programs attempt to "plug the gaps" in a student's background; help him/her learn quickly all those techniques assumed to have already been learned and so necessary to college survival.

The Learning Skills Program at Humboldt State University is operated and funded by the EOP/Special Services Program, a state/federal program for the underprepared and/or the financially needy. It began its operation as an individualized program two years ago. Although the program was designed primarily for EOP/Special Services students, the Center is open to any HSU student and is voluntary.

Students come to the Learning Skills Center from many sources. Some are referred by counselors or

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professors for specific assistance. A continuing effort is made to inform the faculty and staff of the functions of the Center. Students do come in voluntarily, learning of the program activities by word of mouth and/or through campus advertisement. All EOP/Special Services students are automatically involved in at least the preliminary screening.

The steps a student follows in the Learning Skills Lab are outlined in the Flow Chart (Fig. A). The primary diagnostic instrument is the Study Skills Survey, an in-house developed survey based on SRA's "Survey of Reading/Study Efficiency" by Frank L. Christ. Self scoring response sheets are used and the survey is usually scored by the students immediately following the survey. Where students vary from the preferred responses, they are asked to circle that question number on the Personal Program Profile (see Fig. B). If more than half the question numbers for any given row are circled, that area is designated a "problem area". The students are then asked to respond to the Profile in writing, especially to note any objections. If a student comes for help in a particular area, say Test Anxiety, he/she need not take the Survey, although it is highly recommended. This then is the diagnostic phase. The students are now ready

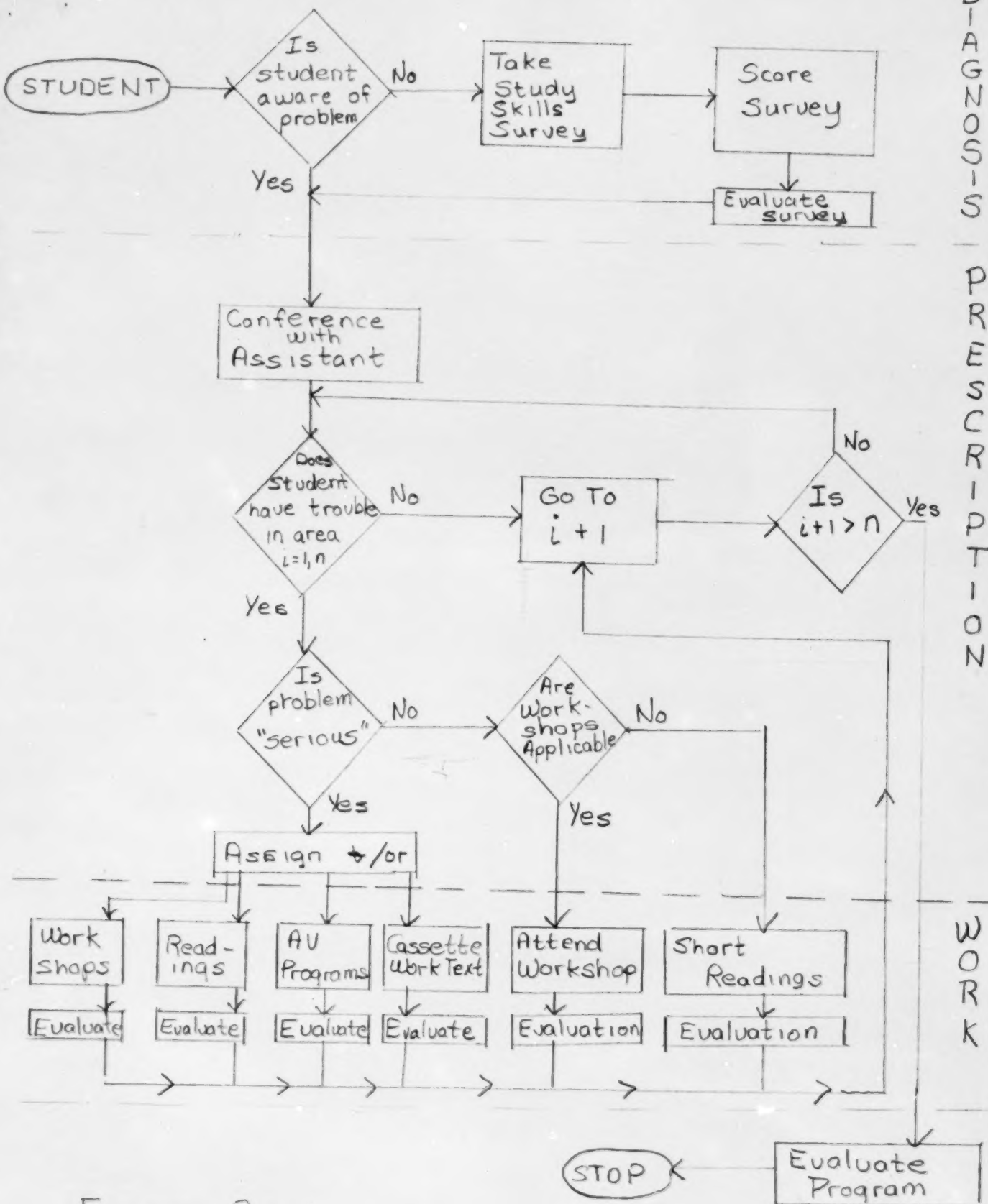
DIAGNOSIS
PRESCRIPTION
WORK
STUDENT
Is student aware of problem
No
Yes
Take Study Skills Survey
Score Survey
Evaluate Survey
Conference with Assistant
Does Student have trouble in area i=1,n
No
Yes
Go To i + 1
Is i+1 > n
No
Yes
Is problem "serious"
No
Yes
Are Work-shops Applicable
No
Yes
Assign 4/or
Work Shops
Read-ings
AV Programs
Cassette Work Text
Attend Workshop
Short Readings
Evaluate
Evaluate
Evaluate
Evaluate
Evaluation
Evaluation
STOP
Evaluate Program

Figure A

Figure B

HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY

E.O.P./SPECIAL SERVICES LEARNING SKILLS CENTER

PERSONAL PROGRAM PROFILE

I.	STUDY MANAGEMENT									
	A. Scheduling	14	44	54						
	B. Personal Aspects	38								
	C. Task Organization	9	42							
	D. Study Environment	1	43							
II.	MAJOR COURSE RELATED SKILLS									
	A. Study Reading	33	47							
	B. Marking/Underlining	64								
	C. Listening/Notetaking	8	28	32	49	53	57			
	D. Classroom Tests	7	16	22	27	37	59	61	62	63
III.	AUXILLARY COURSE SKILLS									
	A. Library Research	5	19	39						
	B. Dictionary	58								
	C. General Vocabulary	3	21	51						
	D. Technical Vocabulary	10								
	E. English	15	55	60						
	F. Grammar/Mechanics	46								
	G. Spelling	23								
IV.	ATTITUDES, INTERESTS, HABITS									
	A. General Reading	13								
	B. Comprehension/Rate	29								
	C. Flexibility	11								
	D. Concentration	2	48	52						
	E. Memory	34								
	F. School Attitudes	20	24	40	45					
	G. Careers	35								
V.	PHYSIOLOGICL ASPECTS									
	A. General Health	6	12	17	25	30				
	B. Vision	4	18	41	50	56				
	C. Act of Reading	26	31	36						

for the prescriptive phase.

The success of the Humboldt program depends heavily on personal contact and interaction between students and Center staff. The prescriptive phase is always a conversation; the materials recommended are based on the student's needs both in terms of skills and time. The Learning Skills Center is, among other things, a library of Learning Skills materials which must be matched to student needs. Each heading and subheading is covered by a multitude of materials in several different formats. See Figure C for a chart of available types of formats: reading materials; cassett work texts; AV materials, and workshops.

Reading materials include anything from short magazine articles to books. The student is expected to read the materials in the lab. Assistants are always available to the student to answer any questions that arise. Reading materials may be assigned at any level of problem depth, from a simple need for helpful hints to severe deficiency. The reading is proportional to the need.

Cassette work texts such as Edwin F. Casebeer's How to Survive in College and the "McGraw Hill Basic Skills System" are for moderate to severe Learning Skills problems. These materials take more time to complete and are very

Available Types of Format

Area	Short Readings	Readings	Cassette Work Texts	AV	Work Shops
I. STUDY MANAGEMENT					
A. Scheduling	✓	✓	✓		✓
B. Personal Aspects	✓	✓	✓		✓
C. Task Organization	✓	✓	✓		✓
D. Study Environment	✓	✓	✓		✓
II. MAJOR COURSE RELATED SKILLS					
A. Study Reading	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
B. Marking/Underlining	✓	✓	✓		✓
C. Listening/Notetaking	✓	✓	✓		✓
D. Classroom Tests	✓	✓	✓		✓
III. AUXILLARY COURSE SKILLS					
A. Library Research	✓				✓
B. Dictionary	✓				
C. General Vocabulary	✓		✓	✓	
D. Technical Vocabulary	✓		✓	✓	
E. English	✓		✓	✓	
F. Grammar/Mechanics	✓		✓		
G. Spelling	✓		✓		
H. Mathematics	✓	✓		✓	
I. Statistics	✓	✓		✓	
IV. ATTITUDES, INTERESTS, HABITS					
A. General Reading	✓	✓	✓		✓
B. Comprehension/Rate	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C. Flexibility	✓		✓		✓
D. Concentration	✓	✓	✓		✓
E. Memory	✓	✓	✓		✓
F. School Attitudes	✓	✓			
G. Careers	✓	✓			
V. PHYSIOLOGICAL ASPECTS					
A. General Health	✓				
B. Vision	✓				
C. Act of Reading	✓				

Figure C

thorough in presentation. Again the student works alone in such programs with assistance available at any time.

AV materials include any of the slide or filmstrip or sound-slide or sound-filmstrip, etc. programs such as the MAST programs or Wordcraft by Communacad. Although these materials can be used in a group setting, for an individualized program it is best that the student can work alone so that he/she can advance at his/her own pace. This kind of program is usually reserved for the more serious problems.

The actual materials used in any Learning Skills Center, of course, depend on the taste of the person in charge, the effectiveness of the materials, and the budget.

Workshops are an exception to the rule of self-paced materials. Wrokshops are designed as interactive small groups with a Learning Skills learder(s) and student participants. The theory and practice is that the participants can offer their own insights and solutions to the problems discussed. The workshops are designed for less serious problems since they seldom last more than two hours and are usually offered only two or three times per quarter. However, they are popular. Workshops offered include: Library Usage, General Study Skills,

Preparing for and Taking Tests(given in conjunction with the Counseling Center personnel who do anxiety allieviation exercises), Ter Paper Organization, Library Research, Reading Skills, and Graduate Record Examination Preparation.

After the student and the Learning Skills assistant decide on an appropriate program, a file is started for the student where he/she records his/her program and progress. Since the HSU Center has limited space, regular appointments are set up to regulate the traffic flow. Each student is assigned to an assistant who will be present at his/her regular appointment time. This is done to facilitate the set up of materials, to provide a resource person, and to follow up on a student's progress and attendance. The assistant also offers personal insights--the "human" touch, for his/her students. Thus the student goes through the work phase.

Although assistance is available in some traditional subject areas such as composition, math, statistics, etc., the Learning Skills Program is not a tutorial program. The student works through the program so that he/she can overcome problems hinderin his educational progress rather than work through his/her text. The text can be used to indicate the areas of difficulty, but tutoring

is a different service.

Evaluation is an important element of an individualized program. The students are asked to evaluate each of the materials they use and, at the end of their programs, they evaluate their individualized programs as a whole. The lab assistants evaluate student progress quarterly and contact "dropouts" to encourage continuation. Finally for the EOP/Special Services students grades are monitored to check for academic success. The general effect of the Learning Skills Center has been good with a slightly higher than expected retention rate and grade point average at the expected average--the students with learning skills problems were performing as well as the general student population.

The positive effect on an individual basis can be demonstrated by the case of student A. She was on Academic Probation when she came to the Center--the problem was that she would prepare well for tests and then fail them. After doing about three hours of reading in the lab, speaking to the lab assistants, and participating in the Test Taking Workshop she went from making "D's" and "F's" to "A's".

In conclusion, a flexible individualized program for Learning Skills development is possible on any campus.

The exact materials are not as important as the existence of a multiplicity of materials of varying degrees of difficulty. The only requisite is a structure of diagnosis, prescription, work, and evaluation and to use the evaluations to modify the program.

Some preliminary correlation studies were done relating student retention and performance to participation in the Learning Skills Lab. The results follow in Appendix A. For interpretation purposes:

LABS 0 = 0 Labs
10 = 1 Lab (generally the initial survey)
20 = 2-5 Labs
30 = 6-10 Labs
40 = 11+ Labs

UNITS 10 = 0-9 Units completed
20 = 10-20 Units
30 = 21-40 Units
40 = 41-60 Units
50 = 61+ Units

GPAFAC 10 = 0-1.0 Grade Point Average
20 = 1.01-1.50 GPA
30 = 1.51-1.99 GPA
40 = 2.00-2.49 GPA
50 = 2.50-2.99 GPA
60 = 3.00-3.49 GPA
70 = 3.50-4.00 GPA

APAFAC G.P.A. FACTOR
BY LABS LABS

APPENDIX A

GPAFAC	LABS 0	10.	20.	30.	40.	ROW TOTAL
10.	10	2	2	0	0	14
	71.4	14.3	14.3	0	0	7.7
	10.5	5.4	4.9	0	0	
	5.5	1.1	1.1	0	0	
20.	2	1	6	0	0	9
	22.2	11.1	66.7	0	0	5.0
	2.1	2.7	14.6	0	0	
	1.1	.6	3.3	0	0	
30.	14	5	3	0	1	23
	60.9	21.7	13.0	0	4.3	12.7
	14.7	13.5	7.3	0	25.0	
	7.7	2.8	1.7	0	.6	
40.	27	15	11	1	1	55
	49.1	27.3	20.0	1.8	1.8	30.4
	28.4	40.5	26.8	25.0	25.0	
	14.9	8.3	6.1	.6	.6	
50.	23	5	10	3	1	42
	54.8	11.9	23.8	7.1	2.4	23.2
	24.2	13.5	24.4	75.0	25.0	
	12.7	2.8	5.5	1.7	.6	
60.	12	5	8	0	1	26
	46.2	19.2	30.8	0	3.8	14.4
	12.6	13.5	19.5	0	25.0	
	6.6	2.8	4.4	0	.6	
70.	7	4	1	0	0	12
	58.3	33.3	8.3	0	0	6.6
	7.4	10.8	2.4	0	0	
	3.9	2.2	.6	0	0	
COLUMN TOTAL	95	37	41	4	4	181
	52.5	20.4	22.7	2.2	2.2	100.0

```
RAW CHI SQ =    26.91582 WITH    24 D.F., SIG. =   .3084
CRAMER'S V =     .19281
CONTINGENCY COEFFICIENT =     .35980
LAMBDA (ASYMMETRIC) =   .01587 WITH GPAFAC   DEP.
                    =   .04651 WITH LABS     DEP.
LAMBDA (SYMMETRIC) =   .02838
UNCERTAINTY COEF. (ASYMMETRIC) =   .04051 WITH GPAFAC   DEP.
                               =   .06136 WITH LABS     DEP.
UNCERTAINTY COEF. (SYMMETRIC) =   .04680
KENDALL'S TAU B =     .02435  SIGNIFICANCE =   .3479
KENDALL'S TAU C =     .02167  SIGNIFICANCE =   .3479
GAMMA =     .03409
SOMERS'S D (ASYMMETRIC) =   .02758 WITH GPAFAC   DEP.
                        =   .02156 WITH LABS     DEP.
SOMERS'S D (SYMMETRIC) =   .02417
ETA =   .07039 WITH GPAFAC   DEPENDENT.
ETA =   .21461 WITH LABS     DEPENDENT.
PEARSON'S R =   .03171  SIGNIFICANCE =   .3359
SPSS/ONLINE AUTO-MODE
? EXECUTE
ENTERING SPSS.
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--- CROSSTABS ---

UNITS BY LABS — UNITS LABS

LABS

UNITS	LABS	0	10.	20.	30.	40.	ROW TOTAL
10.	COUNT	22	5	10	0	1	38
	ROW PCT	57.9	13.2	26.3	0	2.6	21.0
	COL PCT	23.2	13.5	24.4	0	25.0	
	TOT PCT	12.2	2.8	5.5	0	.6	
20.	COUNT	34	10	13	2	2	61
	ROW PCT	55.7	16.4	21.3	3.3	3.3	33.7
	COL PCT	35.8	27.0	31.7	50.0	50.0	
	TOT PCT	18.8	5.5	7.2	1.1	1.1	
30.	COUNT	21	9	9	2	1	42
	ROW PCT	50.0	21.4	21.4	4.8	2.4	23.2
	COL PCT	22.1	24.3	22.0	50.0	25.0	
	TOT PCT	11.6	5.0	5.0	1.1	.6	
40.	COUNT	15	13	8	0	0	36
	ROW PCT	41.7	36.1	22.2	0	0	19.9
	COL PCT	15.8	35.1	19.5	0	0	
	TOT PCT	8.3	7.2	4.4	0	0	
50.	COUNT	3	0	1	0	0	4
	ROW PCT	75.0	0	25.0	0	0	2.2
	COL PCT	3.2	0	2.4	0	0	
	TOT PCT	1.7	0	.6	0	0	
COLUMN TOTAL		95	37	41	4	4	181
		52.5	20.4	22.7	2.2	2.2	100.0

```
RAW CHI SQ =    13.03638 WITH   16 D.F.  SIG. =   .6701
CRAMER'S V =     .13419
CONTINGENCY COEFFICIENT =    .25920
LAMBDA (ASYMMETRIC) =   .02500 WITH UNITS   DEP.
                    =        0 WITH LABS    DEP.
LAMBDA (SYMMETRIC) =   .01456
UNCERTAINTY COEF. (ASYMMETRIC) =   .02963 WITH UNITS   DEP.
                               =   .03651 WITH LABS    DEP.
UNCERTAINTY COFF. (SYMMETRIC) =   .03271
KENDALL'S TAU R =     .03573  SIGNIFICANCE =   .2879
KENDALL'S TAU C =     .03068  SIGNIFICANCE =   .2879
GAMMA =     .05176
SOMERS'S D (ASYMMETRIC) =   .03893 WITH UNITS   DEP.
                        =   .03279 WITH LABS    DEP.
SOMERS'S D (SYMMETRIC) =   .03580
ETA =   .16117 WITH UNITS   DEPENDENT.
ETA =   .06141 WITH LABS    DEPENDENT.
PEARSON'S R =  .00267  SIGNIFICANCE =   .4858


---CROSSTABS---
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